

TORRINGTON
RURAL DISTRICT
1952.

REPORTS
OF THE
**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND SANITARY SURVEYOR**

FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31ST DECEMBER, 1952.

GREAT TORRINGTON:
Printed by COPP & SON, "Osborne Printing Works,"
4, Well Street.

STAFF.

PART TIME OFFICER:

Medical Officer of Health—

DR. E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

WHOLE TIME OFFICERS:

Sanitary Inspector and Building Surveyor—

F. G. GANE, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Clerk—MRS. V. DARCH.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
TORRINGTON.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Torrington
Rural District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

We have pleasure in presenting our ANNUAL
REPORTS for the year ended 31st December, 1952.

We are, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

F. G. GANE, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,

Sanitary Inspector & Building Surveyor.

Torrington Rural District.

✻ 1952 ✻

General Statistics.

Area (Acres)...	...	...	...	...	...	...	79,825
Population (R.G.)	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,283
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,539
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	...	£21,901
Sum realised by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£89 6s. 8d.

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

Live Births Male 28, Female 20, Total 48.

Decrease of 9 on previous year.

Birth Rate per 1000 of estimated Population ... 6'6.

Deaths ... 63.

Death Rate per 1000 of estimated Resident Population ... 8'6.

Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health.

General Sanitary Conditions of the District.

Nursing.

The District is provided with midwives and nurses under the National Health Scheme.

Hospitals.

The District is accommodated by the hospitals at Torrington, Bideford, Barnstaple and Exeter which are administered by a local Regional Board.

Clinics.

These work efficiently through the County Council and other authorities.

Isolation Hospitals.

The majority of our patients are received by the Bideford Isolation Hospital. Special facilities are made for smallpox, etc.

Tuberculosis is admirably looked after by the Barnstaple clinic.

Ambulance Services.

These are very efficiently worked.

Laboratory Services.

These are available and function well, mostly at Exeter.

Maternity Services.

These are provided by Midwives and Hospitals. Baby clinics are very popular. I suggest that normal cases should be encouraged to use the Home Service available and start off in the proper manner, and a larger grant is now going to be made for such cases.

Schools.

I understand these are being brought up to date as money is obtained, especially as regards sanitation and water. I wonder whether more drilling in the 3 R's before tackling "the Frills" might help in diminishing Juvenile Delinquency.

School milk is obtained, as far as possible, from T. T. Herds or is pasteurised, but in rural areas this is not always possible. Possibly in the very few schools where such milk is unobtainable, a recognised brand of full cream baby milk would be the best substitute for safety. Any lack of vitamins might be put right in the school dinner until the other is obtainable.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

These are now largely administered by experts, and two cases of Tubercular milk have been investigated during the year and appropriate action taken.

Venereal Disease.

There is very little, and what there is, is imported from greater wage earning centres. There is an excellent clinic at Barnstaple.

Infestation.

This is very small amongst locals and the school nurses stop it quickly.

Housing.

There are many houses not up to standard. It is hoped that persons in "decaying houses" shall be put into Council houses. Those dilapidated houses could then be reconditioned before being allowed to be "tenanted" again.

If not, in not many years all the new Council Houses will not add up to the total of the "falling down" ones.

Mental Health and Deficiencies.

The County looks after this very conscientiously, and also the deaf mutes and blind.

Water.

This is still very poor in quantity and quality, but some villages have got main water and others will do as soon as possible. It is very necessary that new houses should only be built where water is adequate.

Drainage.

This is rather inadequate as a whole, but villages are being provided with main drainage as funds allow.

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

The results are very satisfactory. Immunisation must be kept up to date.

Infectious Diseases.

During the year the following were reported :—

Whooping Cough	4 cases.	Dysentery	2 cases.
Scarlet Fever	2 „	Erysipelas	3 „
Pneumonia	1 „	Opthalmia	
Tuberculosis	2 „	Neonatorum	1 „
Measles	1 „		

Annual Report of Sanitary Inspector.

DETAILS OF INSPECTIONS.

Dwellings inspected under Housing Acts	...	...	6
Dwellings inspected under Public Health Acts	...	...	18
Re-inspections under Housing Acts	..	...	12
Re-inspections under Public Health Acts	...	...	19
Keeping of Animals	...	...	3
Offensive accumulations	...	...	—
Inquiries into cases of Infectious Disease	...	...	2
Number of rooms disinfected	...	...	2
Visits to Factories	...	...	14
„ „ Bakehouses	...	...	4
„ „ Schools	...	...	5
Food Inspections	...	...	3
Number of Water samples	...	..	8
Building inspections under Bye-laws	...	...	215
Visits to Council Housing Sites	..	...	306
Defective drains	...	...	19
Drains tested	...	...	59
Plans investigated	...	...	77
Petroleum inspections	...	...	10
Dirty houses	...	...	1
Farm Water supplies	...	..	5
Miscellaneous	...	...	39

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 and 1948.

1—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors)

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of			M/c line No. (7)
			Inspections (4)	Written notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities...	1	53	18	—	—	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies						
(a) Subject to the Local Authorities (Transfer of Enforcement Order, 1938†) ...	2	—	—	—	—	2
(b) Others ...	3					3
(iii) Other Premises under the Act‡ (excluding outworkers' premises) ...	4					4
TOTAL ...		53	18	—	—	

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	M/c line No.	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which prosecutions were	M/c line No.
		Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector By H.M. Inspector		

Overcrowding (S.2)	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
(a) Insufficient...	...	...	1	1	1	...	10
(b) Unsuitable or defective	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
(c) Not separte for sexes	...	...	1	1	1	...	12
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework)	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
TOTAL	...	...	60	2	2	2	60

OUTWORK—(Sections 110 and 111).

Nature of Work (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Section 110			Section 111			M/c line No. (9)
		No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c) (3)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council (4)	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists (5)	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises (6)	Notices served (7)	Prosecutions (8)	
Wearing { Making, etc. ... apparel { Cleaning and washing ...	13	93	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	13
	14							14

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year :

(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	24
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	55
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	6
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	18
(3)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	Nil
(4)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	24

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal Notices :—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	16
--	----

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year :

A. Proceedings under Sections 17, 18, and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930.

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	
(a)	by owners	Nil
(b)	by local authority in default of owners ...	Nil

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
(a)	by owners	Nil
(b)	by local authority in default of owners ...	Nil

C. Proceedings under Sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930.

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	Nil

D. Proceedings under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930

(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	...	...	Nil
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	...	...	...	Nil

Improvements carried out and nuisances abated:—

<i>External.</i>	<i>No. of houses.</i>				
Walls repaired	15
Roofs repaired	10
Guttering repaired	6
Downspouts repaired	6
Chimneys repaired	5
Water supply laid on into houses	18
New pumps provided	1
Wells cleansed	4
Well steinings repaired	2
New lengths drain laid	59
Defective drains repaired	15
New inspection chambers	28
Septic tanks repaired	2
New septic tanks	12
New gullies	16
New W.C.'s	12
Water supply laid on to W.C.'s	14
W.C. cisterns renewed	3
New washing accommodation	1
Outbuildings repaired	4
<i>Internal.</i>					
Walls replastered	10
Ceilings replastered	8
Windows repaired	8

Doors repaired	...	...	...	...	4
Floors repaired	...	...	...	...	5
Cooking appliances repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	5
New sinks	...	...	...	...	8
New sculleries	..	...	...	...	3
Baths installed	...	...	...	...	8
Food storage improved		...	...	...	3
Stairs repaired	...	...	...	...	1
Hot water systems fixed		...	...	...	8

It has not been necessary to issue any formal abatement notices during the year.

New Housing Accommodation.

Number of new houses erected by local authority	...	12
„ „ new houses erected by private enterprise...		4

COUNCIL HOUSING PROGRAMME.

12 houses were completed during the year, and at the end of the period under review another 20 were under construction. 64 houses have now been completed in the post-war period. The Council's proposals for 1953 are 16 traditional houses and 12 Woolaway houses. At the close of the year the Council was in a position to make an early start on most of the traditional houses for 1953. The Council departed from its usual policy by selecting one site at Winkleigh for 22 houses. If these houses are erected in large batches it should result in a saving to the Council. One of the greatest difficulties with housing in this district is the absence of a piped water supply. Very few "dug" wells have proved to be sufficient to serve houses equipped with modern amenities, in a dry period. The Council is now erecting a smaller type of traditional house than hitherto. It is a three bedroom non-parlour type house with a superficial area of 886 square feet. These are letting at a rental, exclusive of rates, of 15/- per week compared with 17/6 for the parlour type house of 958 square feet.

CIVIL BUILDING LICENCES.

The issue of licences is carried out by a small Committee of the Council.

Licences issued in respect of repairs, maintenance or miscellaneous building work to housing.

No. of licences issued.	Value in £
8.	4,766.

Since the free limit of building work has been increased to £500 there have been very few applications for licences.

WATER SUPPLIES.

During the year mains extensions were carried out in Sheepwash village and work was commenced on laying a mains extension to Stoney Cross and Webbery. Unfortunately the economic situation of the country has slowed down the various schemes and it now looks as though it will be many years before a piped supply is available to all parishes. The total number of premises now connected to the mains is 304. The following new connections were made during the year :-

St. Giles, 1.	Yarnscombe, 2.	Sheepwash, 58.	Petrockstow, 1.
Little Torrington, 6.	High Bickington, 75.	Alverdiscott, 17.	
Winkleigh, 5.	TOTAL - 165.		

The Devon Agricultural Executive Committee have referred 5 farm water schemes to me for investigation.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

A sewerage and sewage disposal scheme for the village of Winkleigh was completed and put into operation towards the end of the year. The scheme for Shebbear was delayed by the Ministry for financial reasons, but permission had been received to commence work by the close of the year. A scheme had also been submitted to the Ministry for Sheepwash, and plans were in course of preparation for the village of Taddipport, where it is proposed to link up with the Torrington Borough Sewage Works.

RODENT DESTRUCTION.

In conjunction with Torrington Borough Council the Council employs a full time Rodent Operator.

The following work in the Torrington Rural District was carried out during the year :—

Number of Survey calls made...	...	...	...	1338
Number of visits to lay baits on private premises	...	...	...	1417
Number of visits to lay baits on business premises	...	...	...	315
Number of visits to lay baits on refuse tips	...	...	...	116
Number of private premises treated	...	...	...	246
Number of business premises treated...	...	...	...	61

The total number of bodies found was 870, and it was estimated that a total of 1,848 rats were destroyed during the year.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

There are no offensive trades in this district.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Animals intended for human consumption in the district are slaughtered at the Public Abattoir at Bideford, where the carcasses and offals are inspected before allocation.

The following other foods were condemned during the year :

1 4 lb. tin of meat.
1 6 lb. tin of apples.
84 lbs. beef.

The Council have now adopted Bye-laws regulating the handling of Food, and these came into operation on September 1st. Conditions in the 59 food premises in the district are satisfactory.

ICE-CREAM.

No ice-cream is manufactured in the district. 2 licences to sell ice-cream have been issued. In each case factory pre-packed ice-cream is sold.

MILK AND DAIRIES ACTS AND ORDERS.

There are no designated milk bottling establishments in the district, and all retailers are also producers. Milk sampling is, therefore, carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture.

PETROLEUM LICENCES.

24 petroleum storage licences were issued during the year.

SLAUGHTERING LICENCES.

53 licences were issued during the year.

PLANS.

77 plans were submitted during the year, and apart from modifications, all were approved.

I attended monthly meetings of the Divisional Planning Committee of the Devon County Council.

